



Arizona Department of Education

Assessment Section

<http://www.ade.az.gov/standards>

AIMS UPDATE FOR TEST COORDINATORS

Superintendent Tom Horne

November 23, 2004

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We recommend that recipients of the AIMS Update communicate the information to superintendents, charter holders, principals, school test coordinators, teachers, special education directors, curriculum directors, counselors, assistant principals, students, and parents.

TESTING CALENDAR FOR SPRING 2005

February 22-23, 2005	HS AIMS - WRITING/READING
February 22, 2005	Writing
February 23, 2005	Reading
March 1-2, 2005	HS AIMS - WRITING/READING MAKE-UP
March 1, 2005	Writing
March 2, 2005	Reading
April 11- 22, 2005	TESTING WINDOW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIMS-DPA - grades 3 through 8 • TerraNova - grades 2 and 9
April 12, 2005	HS AIMS - MATHEMATICS
April 19, 2005	HS AIMS - MATHEMATICS MAKE-UP

The Science AIMS Field Test will not occur before Spring 2006.

PRETEST WORKSHOPS FOR SPRING TEST ADMINISTRATION

Arrangements for the pretest workshops are being finalized. The half-day workshops will be offered at nine different locations throughout the state during the last two weeks in January. Watch for an AIMS Alert with details and registration information.

OVERVIEW OF STATE ASSESSMENT

A PowerPoint presentation was given at the Mega Conference showing an overview of the new state assessments. High School AIMS and the AIMS-DPA are aligned to the new articulated Reading and Mathematics Standards. The AIMS-DPA, given to students in Grades 3 through 8, includes some TerraNova items. Only students in Grades 2 and 9 will be assessed using the TerraNova. The PowerPoint is available as the first option on the Assessment Section web page: <http://www.ade.az.gov/standards>. This PowerPoint may be shared with faculty, students, and parents.

CRITICAL DATES FOR SPRING 2005

November 19, 2004	Info letter from CTB/McGraw-Hill regarding online enrollment website to be mailed
November 22, 2004	ADE website for uploading label data for HS AIMS, AIMS-DPA, and TerraNova opens – instructions available on the common logon
December 1, 2004	CTB Online Enrollment Website opens
December 15, 2004	CTB Online Enrollment Website closes
January 10, 2005	ADE website for uploading label data for HS AIMS – Writing/Reading closes
January 18-28, 2005	Pretest Workshops for Spring testing
February 1, 2005	Spring 2005 Test Security Agreements due to ADE - required of all districts and charter holders
February 8-11, 2005	HS AIMS – Writing/Reading testing materials delivered to districts/charter holders
February 22-23, 2005	HS AIMS – Writing/Reading
February 25, 2005	ADE website for uploading label data for HS AIMS – Math, AIMS-DPA, and TerraNova closes
March 1-2, 2005	HS AIMS – Writing/Reading – Make-up
March 8, 2005	Last day to ship HS AIMS – Writing/Reading materials to CTB
March 10, 2005	Final date for materials to be at CTB for scoring
March 28 – 31, 2005	HS AIMS – Math, AIMS-DPA, and TerraNova testing materials delivered to districts/charter holders
April 11-22, 2005	AIMS-DPA and TerraNova testing window
April 12, 2005	HS AIMS – Math
April 19, 2005	HS AIMS – Math – Make-up
April 29, 2005	Last day to ship HS AIMS – Math, AIMS-DPA, and TerraNova to CTB
May 2, 2005	Final date for materials to be at CTB for scoring

SPRING 2005 AIMS TESTING **NEW BUT THE SAME**

Students in Grades 3 through 8 and in high school will be taking new AIMS tests in Spring 2005, but there is much that is the same about these tests.

How are the Spring 2005 AIMS tests new?

- High School AIMS and AIMS-DPA are aligned to the new Articulated Reading and Mathematics Standards.
- Grades 3 through 8 will be tested using a dual purpose assessment which will measure the students' level of proficiency in Reading and Mathematics and will provide students' national percentile rankings in Reading, Language, and Mathematics.
- This will be the first operational AIMS testing at Grades 4, 6, and 7.
- Arizona teachers have selected test items from previous AIMS administrations that align to the new articulated standards.
- Arizona teachers identified which of the *TerraNova* items align to the new articulated standards.
- Arizona teachers selected the items to be included on the AIMS tests.

How are the Spring 2005 AIMS tests the same?

- The format of the tests are the same with Reading and Mathematics being multiple choice only and with Writing being one extended writing prompt.
- Writing AIMS will still be scored by multiple readers. At least four readers will read each Grade 3 – 8 Writing AIMS, and at least eight readers will read each HS Writing AIMS.
- The look of the tests will be essentially the same.
- The test development process used in previous versions of the AIMS has remained the same for the Spring 2005 version.
- Arizona teachers have been heavily involved in the development of the content standards, upon which the test is based.
- Arizona teachers have been heavily involved in the item development process.
- Arizona teachers will be involved in the Standards Setting process as in the past.

The Spring 2005 AIMS tests are more “Arizona Grown” than ever before while maintaining the reliability and validity that is so important for the testing results to be meaningful in guiding instruction.

GOODBYE TO HARCOURT

The Fall 2004 HS AIMS administration marks the end of our contract with Harcourt. ADE has enjoyed five productive years working with Harcourt and values the relationships that were developed with key Harcourt staff.

All Reports and CDs for the Fall 2004 HS AIMS are expected to be at districts/charter holders by December 15, 2004.

Questions regarding scoring of the Fall 2004 HS AIMS should be directed to Harcourt's Scoring Hotline at (800) 328-5999.

Other Harcourt issues regarding the Fall 2004 HS AIMS should be directed to Carol Strickler at (800) 800-8305 extension 5620.

HELLO TO CTB/MCGRAW-HILL

ADE welcomes CTB/McGraw-Hill as our new testing contractor. CTB/McGraw-Hill has been working closely with ADE since summer in the development phase of the Spring 2005 High School AIMS and AIMS-DPA. Work with CTB/McGraw-Hill continues to ensure that the administration of the spring assessments goes smoothly.

Representatives from CTB/McGraw-Hill will be at the Pretest Workshops to explain the shipping, handling, and return of testing documents. While these processes are largely the same as in previous years, there will be some differences.

ADE is confident that districts/charter holders will develop a positive working relationship with CTB/McGraw-Hill, just as we have. Contact information for key CTB/McGraw-Hill personnel is included at the end of this newsletter.

NEW TESTING RESULTS REPORTS

A new testing contractor brings the opportunity for new and improved reports. The new reports will include data reported down to the “concept” level based on the 2003 Articulated Reading and Mathematics Standards. The look of the new reports is designed to be cleaner and easier to read. The report intended for parents provides more information in an easier to understand format.

In addition, AIMS reports will be provided much earlier than in previous years. The reports for the HS AIMS – Writing/Reading will be at districts/charter holders by **April 11, 2005**. All other testing results and reports will be at districts/charter holders by **June 1, 2005**.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Published in the Arizona Republic 11-20-04

There has been some confusion regarding special education students and the granting of diplomas.

In 1996, the Arizona legislature passed a statute which provides that the State Board shall “develop and adopt competency tests for the graduation of pupils from high school in at least the areas of reading, writing and mathematics and shall establish passing scores for each such test.”

In 2000, the State Board of Education passed a rule that provided that districts could provide local requirements for special education students to receive diplomas. The rule provided that there would be a notation on the transcript (but not the diploma) that the student was special education.

These both occurred before I took office. I have asked the Attorney General for a formal opinion as to whether the rule is consistent with the statute, since a diploma indicates “graduation.”

When I was at a meeting of the Paradise Valley School Board, to help celebrate an award won by one of its teachers, I was asked about the status of special education students being able to receive diplomas. I reported these facts, and that I had heard that the Attorney General would probably rule that the rule was consistent with the statute. This was not final, and no promises could be made, but if that was the eventual ruling, it would be good news for special education parents, as the students would be able to receive diplomas pursuant to the rule.

At the same time, but unrelated, I stated that I would recommend that the diplomas have endorsements indicating the degree of proficiency reached by students, in general, on the AIMS test, such as proficient, exceeds proficiency, honors, high honors (which includes a full tuition scholarship at state universities), etc.

I foolishly did not anticipate that such informal comments would be considered newsworthy. However, the resulting news story mistakenly confused the two issues. The idea of endorsements has nothing to do with special education, but is to identify proficiency and the higher levels of proficiency. I never have suggested that an endorsement on the diploma indicate that a student was special education, nor have I heard anyone else suggest that.

Tom Horne
Superintendent of Public Instruction

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STATE TESTING TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

The accommodations allowed on the High School AIMS, AIMS-DPA, and the *TerraNova* have been reviewed and are in the process of being posted on the ADE website. The accommodations documents will contain guidelines for special education students, students with a 504 plan, and English language learners. The non-standard accommodations for special education students have remained the same as in previous years. There are some differences for English language learners that were made to clarify accessibility for all students. Only test directions may be orally translated, as nearly verbatim as possible, into a student’s native language. Items cannot be translated in any content area including high school mathematics.

There is **no out-of-level testing** this year. A student with a significant cognitive disability will have the option of taking AIMS-A, Level I or II. AIMS-A Level I is for those students who are performing at the pre-kindergarten or early kindergarten level. AIMS-A Level II is for those students in Grades 6 and above who are performing at the first, second, and third grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics.

For questions regarding the testing of special education students, please contact Exceptional Student Services at (602) 542-4013.

NAEP

The National Center for Education Statistics, an office of the U.S. Department of Education, is responsible for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) which assesses students in Grades 4, 8, and 12 in various subject areas. NAEP results are widely publicized and frequently referred to as the “Nation’s Report Card.”

The 300 Arizona schools who will be participating in the 2005 NAEP have been selected and are currently preparing to administer the exam between January 24th and March 4th. Over 9000 students will be tested in Mathematics, Reading, and Science, including a hands-on assessment using Science lab kits.

The NAEP Question Tool provides released items for classroom use in each of these content areas, including scoring guides, performance data, and sample answers. Please check this website for further information:

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>

You may also contact Dr. Cindy Ziker, Arizona NAEP Coordinator, for further information at (602)542-1653 or cparede@ade.az.gov

EMERGING ISSUES

What's the status of the Science AIMS?

At this point in time, it is expected that the Science AIMS will be a multiple choice test administered in Grades 4 and 8 and as an end-of-course Biology exam in high school. High school students would take the Science AIMS exam in either Grade 9 or 10, depending on which grade they are enrolled in Biology. Science AIMS will not be a high stakes exam in high school.

The blueprint for the Science AIMS exams has not yet been developed. After the blueprint and item specifications are developed, item writing can begin. The field test of Science AIMS will not occur before Spring 2006.

Why would students who have already met the standard on a HS AIMS test want to retest?

The new Honors Endorsement/Tuition Waiver for Arizona Universities has as one of its criteria earning an "Exceeds" on at least two of the three HS AIMS tests. More information about this program can be found at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/asd/tuitionwaiver/>

Students looking to receive a tuition waiver at one of the state universities will want to retake AIMS tests until they reach "Exceeds." Please keep these students in mind as you prepare your high school AIMS orders.

How will the new tests affect the formulas for AZLEARNS?

The formulas for AZLEARNS are expected to change for 2005. Discussions regarding any possible changes in the formula are in the early stages. The Research and Evaluation Section will keep districts/charter holders informed as the discussions progress.

BE A PART OF THE "ARIZONA GROWN" AIMS PROGRAM

ADE has a continuing need for teachers to be a part of the development of test items, field test items review, item selection, and standard setting. Teachers are needed from all grade levels, all content areas, all regions of the state, from large and small schools, and from district and charter schools. To apply for an AIMS committee, please complete and submit the application found at:
<http://www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/downloads/AIMSCommitteeApplicationForm.doc>

RESOURCES ON THE ADE WEBSITE

- Archived AIMS Alerts and AIMS Updates
- State testing calendar
- AIMS Blueprints
- Approved Test Preparation Practices
- AIMS Student Guides
- Released HS AIMS items

COMING SOON TO THE ADE WEBSITE

- Half-size practice AIMS tests for Grades 3 through 8 and high school
- Revised guidelines for standard and non-standard accommodations
- PowerPoint for the Pretest Workshops
- Test Coordinator's Manual
- Testing Administration Manual

CONTACT INFORMATION

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